

OBSERVATIONS ON THE BIRDS OF JAMAICA  
WEST INDIES.

BY W. E. D. SCOTT.

II. A LIST OF THE BIRDS RECORDED FROM THE ISLAND,  
WITH ANNOTATIONS.*(Continued from Vol. VIII, p. 365.)*

44. *Ajaja ajaja* (*Linn.*). ROSEATE SPOONBILL.—I did not meet with this species, nor has Mr. Taylor seen it on the island. It is included from records by Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 346) and by March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 65).

45. *Guara alba* (*Linn.*). WHITE IBIS.—It seems somewhat uncertain whether this species is at present a resident or even a visitor in Jamaica, but it is alluded to by Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 348) and later by Denny (P. Z. S. 1847, p. 39).

46. *Guara rubra* (*Linn.*). SCARLET IBIS.—This bird is an occasional visitor to Jamaica. See, for records, Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 348, Denny, P. Z. S. 1847, p. 39, and March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 65.

47. *Tantalus loculator* (*Linn.*). WOOD IBIS.—The only record of the occurrence of this species in Jamaica is that given by Denny, P. Z. S. 1847, p. 39.

48. *Botaurus lentiginosus* (*Mont.*). AMERICAN BITTERN.—Referred to by Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 346, and by March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 65. Mr. Taylor has no records of the species.

49. *Botaurus exilis* (*Gmel.*). LEAST BITTERN.—A rather common resident, of local distribution. From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote: "This species was found breeding at Port Henderson. Two sets of eggs were brought in. The last clutch, taken June 25, had two eggs in which embryos were formed. The nests were slight, flat structures of twigs on mangrove bushes in the swamps. I have never met with more than two, or at most three, of these birds in the course of a whole day, and they were always seen singly. So far as my experience goes they seem to prefer the vicinity of fresh or brackish water."

50. *Ardea occidentalis* *Aud.* GREAT WHITE HERON.—Referred to by Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 346, and by March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 63. Mr. Taylor says: "A large white Heron seen among the salines at Port Henderson may have been this species."

51. *Ardea herodias* *Linn.* GREAT BLUE HERON.—This would seem to be an uncommon bird in Jamaica. It is referred to by Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 346, 347, at some length; also by March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 63.

52. *Ardea egretta* *Gmel.* AMERICAN EGRET.—Apparently a rare or accidental species in Jamaica. See Sclater, P. Z. S. 1861, pp., 70-80; also March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 63.

53. *Ardea candidissima* *Gmel.* SNOWY HERON.—Gosse regarded this species as a rare migrant visitor in winter ('Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 336, 337), and Mr. Taylor says: "Occasionally seen in the winter months."

54. *Ardea rufescens* *Gmel.* REDDISH EGRET.—Included from the record by March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 63.

55. *Ardea tricolor ruficollis* (*Gosse*). LOUISIANA HERON.—This seems the commonest Heron of the island, but is much more abundant on the southern than the northern shore. The following notes are from Mr. Taylor's experience: "This was the most common Heron seen at Port Henderson. The swamps and shallows in the early part of the day fairly teemed with them, yet they were shy and very difficult to approach from the open. The nests were in the highest mangrove trees, deep in the recesses of the swamps. When disturbed or alarmed at feeding they retired in a body to the tallest trees in the most inaccessible parts of the swamps, coming back, however, immediately when the danger appeared over. The birds were very restless at feeding time, making short flights here and there, and constantly changing positions, so that the scene was usually a very animated one. Many nests had young in June, while fresh eggs were obtained in the same month."

56. *Ardea cœrulea* *Linnaeus*. LITTLE BLUE HERON.—A common resident and observed at many points during my stay. From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote as follows: "Next to *A. tricolor ruficollis* the most abundant Heron at Port Henderson, breeding in numbers in all the swamps; of a large number of eggs taken in July more than half were taken in a very advanced state of incubation. Pied or parti-colored birds are not infrequent and many young on leaving the nest show a large proportion of blue in the plumage. The white phase is common."

57. *Ardea virescens* *Linnaeus*. GREEN HERON.—Met with at Stony Hill once, and it was rather common about Boston. Mr. Taylor writes me: "I did not meet with one of these birds during all my stay at Port Henderson, though they are of common occurrence elsewhere, especially among the mangroves at the Pallisades. Like the little Bittern this species is only seen singly, and I have met with it along the banks of rivers many miles from the sea. It is resident and breeds, but I know nothing of its nesting habits."

58. *Nycticorax nycticorax nævius* (*Bodd.*). BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.—Mr. Taylor has not seen this species, nor did I meet with it. The records of Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 344-346) and of March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 65) are warrants for its admission to this list.

59. *Nycticorax violaceus* (*Linnaeus*). YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON.—This species I met with several times while on the island, where it is resident and of common occurrence locally. Subjoined are Mr. Taylor's interesting notes: "Common in all extensive mangrove swamps. Breeds.

Three eggs of this species were taken in June from the swamps near Passage Fort; the female was shot on the nest. At about dusk on calm, still evenings in the winter months these birds fly over from the Pallisades, singly or in pairs. They usually come flying very low, just clearing the tops of the houses on gaining the land. When it is too dark to distinguish them, their loud, startling note, a single *quack*, from which they take their name, tells of their presence in passing.

60. *Aramus giganteus* (Bonap.). LIMPKIN. CLUCKING HEN. — There can be no doubt that this was, in Gosse's day at least, by no means a rare bird on the island, but, if not extinct, it is at least very rare now. Mr. Taylor's notes are quoted from as follows: "No living example seen. A skin in the museum of the Jamaica Institute is labelled: 'presented by H. O. Vickers, Esq., 12-12-86. Locality Westmoreland.'"

61. *Rallus longirostris caribæus* Ridgw. MANGROVE HEN. — Having had little or no opportunity to study the Rails while on the island I quote from Mr. Taylor in regard to the species under consideration. "I first became familiar with the habits of the 'Mangrove Hen' during a visit to the extensive swamps bordering the Pallisades. They have always proved shy and difficult of approach. In the swamps near Port Henderson these birds nested in hundreds, but though I spent many hours wading through the shallows in the search for eggs, and counted at one time upwards of twenty-five or thirty nests, I did not see a single bird. At the Pallisades I have obtained many specimens, but only through lying in wait at the little open pools where they love to feed. They appeared most abundant at dawn and just before sunset, when they were very noisy. They called to one another with a harsh, stuttering *crek*, and often their cry alone determined their presence. Many clutches of eggs were brought in from the swamps at Port Henderson, varying in number from five to eleven. All the nests I examined were on the ground among the roots; one was almost sure to be found at the base of any one of the numerous detached clumps that dotted the shallows in all directions. The materials were roots and dry leaves, large quantities of which were used, sufficient, in most cases, to raise the eggs above the influence of wet."

62. *Porzana concolor* (Gosse). RED RAIL. WATER PARTRIDGE. — Mr. Taylor has not met with this species, nor was I so fortunate as to find it. The reader is referred to Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 369, 370) for the original description of the species and notes regarding it.

63. *Porzana flaviventris* (Bodd.). MINUTE CRAKE. — Mr. Taylor says in his notes as follows: "Shot near Passage Fort, December 27, 1886. Of frequent occurrence. Skin: length, 6 inches; bill olive; legs and feet yellowish."

64. *Porzana carolina* (Linn.). CAROLINA RAIL. STRIATED CRAKE. — The following I quote from Mr. Taylor's notes: "One shot on one of the canals near Passage Fort, December 27, 1886. Not uncommon in the winter months. Skin: length, 9 inches; bill yellowish at base, merging into olive brown."

65. *Porzana jamaicensis* (Gmel.). BLACK RAIL. LITTLE RED-EYED

CRAKE.—Resident according to Gosse who procured specimens in August and in February ('Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 375, 376).

66. *Ionornis martinica* (Linn.). PURPLE GALLINULE. SULTANA.—Mr. Taylor tells me that he has had no personal experience with this species though it is said to be resident and not uncommon in many inland swamps. Gosse speaks of it as "not uncommon" and gives details as to where he found it ('Birds of Jamaica,' pp. 377-380).

67. *Gallinula galeata* (Licht.). FLORIDA GALLINULE. SCARLET-FRONTED GALLINULE.—A common resident species in suitable localities. At Boston, Portland Parish, I met with them frequently, and took two very young birds in the black downy plumage, perhaps ten days old. on January 23, 1891.

From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote: "Abundant in all wet places where there is suitable cover, salt marshes excepted. Along the line of railway between Kingston and Spanish Town is an extensive line of mangrove swamp, in some places bordering the track on either side. Here, in every month and at almost all hours, these birds can be seen feeding among the rank growth at the edges of the swamp or running swiftly among the roots of the mangroves, scarcely alarmed by passing trains. Among the common people this bird is always called the Coot. I have had eggs brought me at the end of the year as well as in the months of May and June."

68. *Fulica americana* Gmel. AMERICAN COOT.—A common resident, but perhaps not as plentiful as *Gallinula galeata*. From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote the following, as of interest: "Abundant, though not seen as often as the common Gallinule. Of eggs taken in May and June some were fresh, and others were in an advanced state of incubation. More than one brood probably is reared."

69. *Recurvirostra americana* Gmel. AMERICAN AVOCET.—Mr. Hill informed Gosse of the occasional visits of this species to the island ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 389). It must be considered, however, as rare or casual at the present time, for it has not been observed by Mr. Taylor.

70. *Himantopus mexicanus* (Müll.). BLACK-NECKED STILT.—A not uncommon winter resident in suitable localities, remaining till late in the spring. The following interesting notes I quote from Mr. Taylor: "Until late in the month of June small companies of these Stilts frequented the swamps and salines at Port Henderson. They were often in company with Herons, fishing in the shallows close to the bordering mangroves where the water reached above the tarsus. A few birds probably stay to breed."

71. *Philohela minor* (Gmel.). AMERICAN WOODCOCK.—The evidence as to the occurrence of this species in Jamaica seems very slight and rests largely on hearsay. See Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 354. Mr. Taylor has been unable to learn of any specimens.

72. *Gallinago delicata* (Ord). WILSON'S SNIBE.—A regular winter visitor to the island. These birds were not uncommon at Boston late in January. A female was taken on the 23d of that month. Gosse says that

the birds are "rather common from November to April" ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 353). Mr. Taylor speaks of it as "occasionally seen."

73. *Macrorhamphus griseus* (Gmel.). DOWITCHER. — Mr. Taylor gives me this species in his list of birds observed, without comment. Mr. Cory refers to Jamaica records ('Birds of the West Indies,' p. 233). It would appear that Gosse had confounded this or the next species with *Gallinago delicata* ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 353, lines 6-16).

74. *Macrorhamphus scolopaceus* (Say). LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER. — There is apparently the same ground for including this species in the present list, as there is for its near ally, the preceding species. Mr. Taylor does not mention it, however.

75. *Micropalama himantopus* (Bonap.). STILT SANDPIPER. — Recorded by March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 67. Mr. Taylor gives it to me in his list without comment.

76. *Tringa canutus* Linn. KNOT. — Recorded by Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 354) and by March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 67). Mr. Taylor has not seen the species.

77. *Tringa maculata* Vieill. PECTORAL SANDPIPER. — This is included by A. and E. Newton in their list (Handb. Jamaica, 1881, p. 116) but is not recorded by Mr. Taylor.

78. *Tringa fuscicollis* Vieill. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER. — There are records from the island: Sclater, P. Z. S. 1861, pp. 70, 80; Albrecht, J. f. O. 1862, p. 205. Mr. Taylor has not observed it.

79. *Tringa minutilla* Vieill. LEAST SANDPIPER. — This seems to be a regular but not very common winter visitor and migrant.

80. *Ereunetes pusillus* (Linn.). SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER. — This Sandpiper would seem to occupy about the same position in the bird fauna of the island as the last. For remarks as to the probability of the occurrence of *Ereunetes occidentalis* Lawr., see Cory, 'Birds of the West Indies,' p. 234.

81. *Calidris arenaria* (Linn.). SANDERLING. — Mr. Taylor gives this as a common winter visitor. He says the strip of sand beach dividing Kingston Harbor from the sea, known as the Palisades, is a favorite resort of these birds.

82. *Limosa* ———. — A species of *Limosa* is referred to by March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 64), but not fully determined.

83. *Totanus melanoleucus* (Gmel.). GREATER YELLOWLEGS. — There are numerous Jamaican records. Mr. Taylor gives it in his list, but says he has not personally observed it.

84. *Totanus flavipes* (Gmel.). YELLOWLEGS. — A regular winter visitor, and apparently more common than the last. Mr. Taylor's notes are to this effect.

85. *Totanus solitarius* (Wils.). SOLITARY SANDPIPER. — A common winter resident in suitable localities. Common at Boston in December, January, and February. A male taken on January 21 at this point is moulting. This is particularly apparent in the primary quills, the first of which in each wing have just been replaced. The new feathers are particularly dark.

The following notes are from Mr. Taylor: "Very common at the end of the year on all sandy beaches. They are usually seen singly, though I have more than once met with small parties composed of six or eight birds. They frequent the edges of the shores, picking among the weeds and refuse and following the retreating waves for food. The earliest record of their arrival, that I can find among my notes, is dated September 4."

86. *Symphemia semipalmata* (Gmel.). WILLET.—There are records by both Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 354) and March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 67). Mr. Taylor tells me that he has not met with the species, and it must be considered rare or casual.

87. *Bartramia longicauda* (Bechst.). BARTRAMIAN SANDPIPER.—This is also only a casual or very rare visitor to the island. The only record is that given by March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 67), and this appears to be somewhat doubtful. Mr. Taylor has no personal records of the species.

88. *Actitis macularia* (Linn.). SPOTTED SANDPIPER.—I found this species not uncommon in suitable localities whenever I was able to investigate the bird fauna of the island. This was from late in November till the last of February. Gosse says ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 349): "It arrives from the north about the end of August, and remains certainly till after the middle of April, and I am not sure that individuals do not stay all the summer." Mr. Taylor gives me the following notes: "This species is probably a resident. It is common in favorable localities, but I have no notes regarding it."

89. *Numenius longirostris* Wils. LONG-BILLED CURLEW.—Apparently a rare or casual visitor. Referred to by both Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 348) and March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 68). Mr. Taylor gives me the following notes: "A Curlew reported to me as seen near Milk River in Clarendon during the winter months may be this species."

Besides *Numenius longirostris*, there are evidently one or two other species of Curlews or Godwits that seem to have occurred on the island. From the following quotation from Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 348) it will be seen that the identity of these is uncertain. "On the same authority [Mr. Hill] I mention two species of Curlews, the one known as the Black Curlew, which is *Numenius longirostris*, and the other called the White Curlew, which may be *N. hudsonicus*, or perhaps *Ibis alba*."

90. *Charadrius squatarola* (Linn.). BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER.—Records from Jamaica by both Gosse ('Birds of Jamaica,' p. 333) and March (Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 66). Mr. Taylor has no personal record of this nor of the following species.

91. *Charadrius dominicus* Müll. AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER.—There are several well-authenticated records of its occurrence on the island: Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 333; March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., 1864, p. 66; Cassin, *ibid.*, p. 241; Albrecht, J. f. O., 1862, p. 205.

92. *Ægialitis vocifera* (Linn.). KILLDEER.—This is apparently a common resident species in suitable localities throughout the island. At Constant Springs and on the Liguanea Plain I saw them constantly

throughout the months of November and December, sometimes singly, sometimes in pairs, and oftenest in small flocks. During my stay on the north side of the island, from the last of December till the middle of March, I saw them daily in suitable localities. At Boston a flock of twenty to thirty individuals frequented the large pasture below the house during the entire three months spent at this point. This flock still remained unbroken on March 17, the day I left this point.

The following record of the breeding of the species I quote from Mr. Taylor's notes: "An abundant resident species, though I know nothing of its habits. It is described as frequenting bare open localities rather than marshes, etc., and I have never met with it near the seashore or even in the vicinity. Three eggs received in July last (much incubated) labelled 'Ring-tailed Plover,' are obviously referable to this species."

93. *Ægialitis semipalmata Bonap.* SEMIPALMATED PLOVER. — See Gosse, 'Birds of Jamaica,' p. 333, and March, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila. 1864, p. 66, also Albrecht, J. f. O. 1862, p. 205, for records from Jamaica.

94. *Ægialitis meloda (Ord)*. PIPING PLOVER. — The following notes are kindly furnished me by Mr. Taylor: "In October, 1887, Piping Plover were abundant among the lagoons and mangrove swamps at the Palisades; they moved about in large flocks which, when once alighted on the shell-bestrewn beaches, it was impossible to detect."

95. *Ægialitis wilsonia (Ord)*. WILSON'S PLOVER. — From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote: "This was the only Plover seen at Port Henderson. Small flocks daily resorted to the large shallows frequented by the Herons and Stilts. It is apparently resident."

96. *Arenaria interpres (Linn.)*. TURNSTONE. — From Mr. Taylor's notes I quote as follows: "On a much later date in June than that on which I last saw the Black-necked Stilt, three Turnstones were shot near Passage Fort; their plumage was then undergoing change. The occurrence of these birds at this time of the year seems worthy of note, though these individuals may have been only stragglers from the main flocks, or perhaps barren birds. During the winter months the Turnstone is common in all favorable localities. It was the first bird I saw on landing at the Morant Cays in April, 1890. At that time large flocks frequented the different islets particularly the largest two. In the mornings and afternoons they fed along the shores, as well as on many of the bare open spaces where the grass had been burnt away and from which I often flushed a flock."

✓ 97. *Jacana spinosa (Linn.)*. The following notes are from Mr. Taylor, and he kindly showed me the bird in question: "Notice of the species here, hitherto recorded only from Cuba, Haiti and San Domingo, is based on a specimen of an immature bird in the collection of the Institute of Jamaica, where it remained for a long time in a neglected state, uncared for and unidentified. It is labelled '12-12-86, presented by H. O. Vickers, locality, Westmoreland.' The sex is undetermined. I have not met with the living bird."

(To be continued.)